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CLAIMS

1. Harvesting apparatus for use when manually harvesting field-grown produce, the harvesting apparatus having a support structure, a plurality of driven  
5 rotatable members by which the support structure can be moved, and a body support element supported by the support structure, the body support element being able to support a picker, as hereinbefore defined, and being movable over an extended range relative to the support structure so that, when the harvesting apparatus is moving in a first direction, the body support element can be  
10 selectively positioned relative to the support structure.
2. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein a plurality of the movable body support elements is provided.
- 15 3. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the extended range of movement is in the order of 1 metre or more.
4. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the or each body support element includes motorised means for  
20 adjusting the position of the body support element relative to the support structure.
5. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the or each body support element is manually movable.
- 25 6. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the or each body support element is slidable along a linear runner or pair of linear runners fixedly supported on the support structure.
- 30 7. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,

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wherein the or each body support element is vertically adjustable relative to the support structure to suit an individual picker.

8. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
5 wherein the or each body support element is adjustable in a transverse direction.

9. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
wherein the or each body support element is adapted to enable the respective  
picker to lie prone thereon.

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10. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
further comprising a conveyor system and a collection area, the conveyor system  
transporting produce placed thereon by the picker to the collection area for  
packing.

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11. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the conveyor system  
includes an endless rigid track which is supported by the support structure and  
from which receiving members are suspended.

20 12. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in claim 10 or claim 11, wherein the  
collection area is supported by the support structure.

13. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,  
further comprising means for optimising the speed of the driven rotatable  
25 members based on the position of the or each body support element relative to  
the support structure.

14. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the speed  
optimisation means includes one or more position sensors which monitor the  
30 position of the or each body support element.

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15. Harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, further comprising one or more sensors through which the direction of movement of the harvesting apparatus can be automatically adjusted.

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16. A method of manually hand-picking produce arranged in rows using harvesting apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, the method comprising the steps of :

10 a) a picker positioning him, or her, -self on a body support element of the harvesting apparatus;

b) driving the harvesting apparatus along the rows of the produce at a constant or substantially constant speed; and

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c) the picker manually hand-picking the produce as it approaches, and selectively moving the body support element over the extended range to optimise the position of the picker relative to the occurrence of the produce, so that an increase in the amount of produce picked and an increase in the speed of movement of the harvesting apparatus can be obtained.

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17. A method as claimed in claim 16 when dependent on claim 7 or claim 8, further comprising a step (d), prior to step (a), of adjusting the relative vertical and/or transverse position(s) of the body support element to suit the picker.

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18. A method as claimed in claim 16, when dependent on any one of claims 10 to 12, or claim 17, further comprising a step (e), subsequent to step (c), of placing the picked produce on the conveyor system.

30 19. A method as claimed in claim 18, further comprising a step (f),

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subsequent to step (e), of a packer at the collection area removing the picked produce from the conveyor system and packing the picked produce.

20. Harvesting apparatus for use when manually harvesting field-grown  
5 produce, the harvesting apparatus having a support structure, a plurality of driven  
rotatable members by which the support structure can be moved, a plurality of  
body support elements supported by the support structure and on which pickers,  
as hereinbefore defined, can be supported to harvest the said produce, a  
collection area at which the harvested produce is deposited, and a conveyor  
10 system which transports the harvested produce from the picker to the collection  
area.

21. Harvesting apparatus substantially as hereinbefore described with  
reference to the accompanying drawings.

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